

Adventurers' Paradise

Foreigners in Shanghai worked lightly,
lived well, read the papers and agreed
the Japs would never dare molest them

by HILAIRE du BERRIER

• ARTICLE •



EVERYONE says Shanghai was a fine place back in the good old days, and by the good old days they mean way back two years ago.

It wasn't a beautiful town as towns go and there were

not any hills or woods to drive through or beaches to sun yourself on, but there was something about Shanghai that made it different from any other place on earth.

If it was the tawdry you were after, Shanghai had it with blue ribbons on, but if you wanted to keep a race horse and a servant on a floorwalker's pay Shanghai was the only place I know of where you could do it.

You couldn't beat that town for tolerance and variety. Any time you walked in the Park Hotel or the Cathay or the Palace you could find someone to have a drink with or talk to. It might be a tai-pan or an importer, a United States Treasury Department Informer, an airplane salesman or a gambler or a missionary or a bum, but you couldn't tell till you talked to them, and they all had a story.

When you picked up a conversation with someone in Shanghai there was always an element of chance that made it more interesting.

The cabarets weren't exclusive. Russian girls sat around like a flock of vultures waiting for a lone male to pounce on, but there was one thing you could say for those cabarets; they didn't cost much.

Whether you went to Joe Farren's or the Arcadia or Del Monte's or any place else, you would find people in evening clothes at one table and a poor mug in a brown suit and green shirt at the next, but both were satisfied; the tai-pans because there wasn't any place better and the poor man because, such as it was, it was the best and even he could afford it.

If he couldn't afford it he went anyway and signed the check, only they call the check a chit in China. After you went to a place

two or three times you became a habitué and quit paying cash, because you couldn't tell what might happen before the end of the month.

Smart people went to the French Club at cocktail time and those who weren't so smart went to the dumps on "Blood Alley." It was a matter of taste.

Everyone knocked off work when there was a race meeting, and on Sundays the people who would be taking a drive in their car if they were in America turned out in pink jackets for a hunt.

The No. 1 polo player was Judge Allman who had been a soldier of fortune in Mexico once, American consul in Tsingtao, and a judge in Shanghai. When the Mexican consul in Shanghai wrote a book about the place and had to leave, Allman got his job.

He called his string of horses the Dixie stable and took the Confederate flag for his colors, but no one knew what it was. When Bill Hunt bought a Chinese steamship line and made him his attorney, the Judge said: "Work is the curse of the polo classes," and took the job to support his horses.

"Fletch" said: "Now if Hunt makes a million and quits he may get away with it, but if he makes seven million those Chinese he bought the boats from will leave an ax in his head some night. You can't take something away from the Chinese and make money at it and get away. That's why he needs Allman, to tell him when to quit," and "Fletch" was right.

An ex-machine gunner made the perfect solicitor in Shanghai. He got you out before you started to lose and before you made too much, and in the meantime business was just as thrilling as horse-racing.

When a go-down full of worthless gas masks had to be cleared out a marine officer offered them to Signor X for 5c apiece, saying he might be able to use the waterproof bags and the eyeglasses for something.

Signor X agreed that maybe the boy scouts might buy them, then he sold the lot to a Chinese general for ten dollars each, and when the General took two prisoners out of his jail to test them on the Signor said: "Santa Maria! Now I'm going to have this

on my conscience!"

Then, while they were sealing the prisoners in a room full of gas, he thought it over: The jail was a filthy place. They would have died in there anyway. At least he was getting them out of that torture, but he couldn't figure out what excuse he was going to give the General when he should open the door and find them dead.

X thought he was seeing ghosts when the jail door swung open and the two prisoners jumped out wanting to know if they could go home now. Then he realized: the gas was no good, and with a look of hurt innocence on his face he said to the General: "You see!—and you distrusted me; Me, your friend. You think I would sell you bad gas masks?"

He gave two dollars out of every ten back to the General and the soldiers had the feeling of confidence a gas mask gives when you look at it, and everyone went home happy.

Vieki Baum should have written *Grand Hotel* in the French Concession. There was a man with a haircut like Paderewski's in my hotel who said he hadn't been in a barber shop for twelve years as a matter of principle. A barber ran away with his wife.

A little French woman had a parrot that kept yelling for rickshaws, and then the rickshaw coolies would come to her and want to be paid for waiting.

There was an ex-housemaid from Harbin who swept into the dining room every noon in riding clothes, carrying a crop and a riding hat.

When she spoke of the hotel she shuddered and said: "—too awful! Nothing but navy wives and British military."

The blonde dressmaker who sat at the next table bowed graciously at all the ladies as they entered and then leaned over and told me how much they owed her, how ragged they were when they came to Shanghai and whose husbands their friends were.

Next door was a little boy whose father

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Aitken: Playboy Ceramist

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Barrows Co., in Cincinnati. The mere preliminary work for this job — such as preparing sketches and color charts and baking smaller specimens elsewhere to determine the temperatures at which various colors should be fed to the flames — alone would have brought the average artist to the point of physical exhaustion, but Aitken completed every task to every patron's satisfaction, and to his own. While he is engaged on one of his big steel-backed enamel compositions, he will go on a twenty-hour daily shift for a week, for the slightest relaxation of vigilance will destroy

the most ambitious projects completely. A bad spot in a painting or a drawing can be wiped out, and very little lost, but not so with ceramic ware, or enamels. The biggest jobs require the use of the Cincinnati kiln; in New York he has the use of his apartment kiln and of a commercial furnace out in the suburbs at Jamaica, Queens, while out in Cleveland there awaits him the oven in which he gave permanent shape and color to the objects of art which established his reputation as one of the best ceramic artists this generation has given to America. #

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was French and whose mother was Russian. He had a Chinese amah and went to a school where they taught in English, so he roller-skated in esperanto.

"Doc" Nance said: "You have already paid one bill, so you can charge for awhile now. There's no use in letting you pay for everything."

Gigolos got married and became brokers and mistresses blackmailed their "entrepreneurs" till they could afford to be ladies. There was a future and a past for anyone with ambition back in those days in Shanghai.

When George Moorad wrote a story about his boss it didn't look so bad in manuscript, but when it showed up on the newsstands George went down to the docks and got on the first boat he came to.

The dossiers consulates keep on their nationals in that town would make Rabelais lift his eyebrows. Private citizens would be arrested for sending such stuff through the mails and sued for libel for writing it, but it was an easy way of getting a free drink in Shanghai. Any kind of a story would get you a gimlet from the right man; it didn't have to be true, and his expense account paid for it.

Shanghai was sort of a geographical foreign legion. If you didn't like the color of your passport you bought another, and no one asked where your polo ponies came from. Political refugees from other lands came there without any passports and Chinese politicians came there when they had too many. Shanghai absorbed them all.

You could spend months in the French Club and never hear the same stories twice. There were anecdotes of old war-lords and gamblers and drinkers and flyers; race horses and courtesans and promoters, philanthropists and missionaries and diplomats.

"One-arm" Sutton once bought a sweepstake ticket from a beggar for a dollar and won three hundred thousand. Bagdad Jews started out selling opium and ended endowing policemen's charities. One of the town's biggest swindles was a bank for missionaries and some

of its largest buildings were owned and named after a woman who used to sell flowers with dope in them.

Yet underneath the tinsel there was a world of small businessmen, importers and exporters who lived well and worked lightly and didn't have any worries. They read the papers and laughed at the scandals and said someday the Japs would fight the Chinese but they would not dare get tough with the foreigners.

Across from the race track is a Chinese shrine with joss-sticks burning at its base and ashes falling in a fine dust on other ashes.

A carpet of ashes piles up like prayed prayers till a gust of wind or a street cleaner's broom seaters them in the air or on the streets, like all prayers and dreams when the fire goes.

Once Marge Rodgers stopped before that shrine. She was tall and straight and elegant, one of the best-dressed women in Shanghai, and she put her hands together and bowed three times, mumbling chin-chin something. I couldn't understand.

She said: "I always do that."

Rickshaw coolies try to cut in front of passing cars as closely as they can, to get rid of the devils following them. The devils are cut off from the rickshaw and hook themselves onto the ear, and the coolie looks back and says: "Well, that's over—" but the man in the rickshaw shuts his eyes and waits for a crash at every corner.

When you made enough money to quit riding in rickshaws you bought a car. Race horses cost from ten dollars to ten thousand and you didn't have to be a millionaire to build a home with coolie labor and fill it with Chinese servants.

Outside the city you drove past fine houses with dragons on the gates and a swimming pool in the garden; ears lined up in front of the country club at cocktail time and horses and hounds on Sundays.

Some people went up and the Russians on Avenue Joffre went down, but the city wasn't any more lawless or law-abiding than any other; it was only more amusing. White Russians and red each

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had a headquarters and spied on each other, and both were systematically expelled back and forth between the French Concession and the International Settlement.

Mike Hermann took a bum in to live with him, and one day the bouncer disappeared taking all of Mike's belongings he could carry with him, but three or four times a year he sends a postal card, from a different corner of the world each time, saying: "Dear Mike: I'm having a fine time but wish I were back in Shanghai. Yours always, Red."

Every new arrival was considered a spy, a dope smuggler, an arms runner or an international crook until he had been there long enough to hang it on someone who arrived after he did. You had to be patient. In winter you drank to keep warm and in summer you drank to keep cool, so between drinking and horses there wasn't much time for work.

Life rolled along in rickshaws with coolies doing the pulling and Sikh policemen clearing the traffic. I'm glad I got to see Shanghai while the Japs still bowed to white men and the right to live was like breathing, because it will never be the same again.

One day war came up like a cloud of locusts, shutting the sun out and destroying the rice fields. Sand bags and barbed-wire barricades went up, making streets into a no-man's land.

The Shanghai Volunteer Corps was called out and an American volunteer captain, coming back to barracks late, found a Standard Oil man on guard in his pajamas, sitting in the middle of the road under a suspended street light and reading a book.

Refugees poured in from the country and from Hongkew in an endless column, carrying babies and a few belongings. Streaming over Garden Bridge, their march, from the housetops, looked like a long black monster without a head and without an end; a monster that always goes with war, just ahead of invading or retreating armies, bayonets behind it and God knows what before.

In the Settlement and the French Concession they huddled in doors and alleys, looking dumbly at you if you looked at them and otherwise not looking at anything at all.

The regular beggars of the city patted their stomachs and pulled at your sleeve. They were "cunshaw" opportunists of the war, but the real refugees were farmers; who could walk in a paddy field but hadn't learned to beg in streets.

Frank Cole, who used to work in the Young Marshal's air force, looked at a stunned old farmer sitting on the curb with a woman and a baby, reached in his pocket and gave the old man a dollar.

He held it for a moment, looking at Frank and then at the money and thinking a miracle had happened, then he bowed low and said something in Chinese, looking like he was about to cry.

I saw a poor man stand for a

long time with his head bowed and his hat in his hand before the stone figure with the smoke of joss sticks curling from its feet. His face a study in faith and all the old virtues; while two miles away war was waiting for a whistle.

Down where the river turns off and a road separates Japanese town from the Settlement a tense mob had gathered on the Chinese side of the road. Municipal police had crowded them back a block and once in awhile a tank rolled by, but the streets on the Japanese side were deserted as far as you could see except for the soldiers standing on the corners with their feet wide apart and a bayoneted gun gripped in both hands in front of them.

Steel helmets pulled low over the soldiers' faces made them look more brutish than ever. All of them looked alike, brown body and a face sculptured to represent brutality, a statue of hate holding a bayonet. They gave you an impression of animals trained to kill and then unleashed.

A firecracker would have started a battle on that street, and looking from one side to the other you had the expectant feeling of a little boy watching a hand with a match in it move nearer a dynamite fuse. All they were awaiting was a pretext; a revolver shot from a window or the backfire of a motor.

It gave you a futile feeling to look at those mad men in uniforms on the Japanese side of the road. You felt as though someone had taken their chains and put them on you, keeping you there to see what was happening but unable to do anything about it.

You visualized some Senator from North Dakota back in Washington, reading the papers and making a speech about what he wouldn't do while you are being pushed around the sidewalks by Japanese soldiers in Shanghai and making speeches about what you would like to, Senators never get in wars and foreign countries.

There was nothing to do but sit back and wish the Chinese luck, like a ringside spectator swinging his arms at a prize fight, that Friday afternoon.

Next morning about ten-fifty I met Hendryk Bos, from the Dutch Consulate, just inside the Nanking Road entrance of the Cathay, and Bos said: "How about a drink?" and I said: "Sure."

We walked past Jean, at the cigar counter, and through the lounge full of American tourists, the same crowd that had been in Nanking the week before.

Bos was saying: "No, I don't think there will be a war," when we heard the buzz of airplane motors and turned back towards the Bund entrance to see who was up.

No matter how many airplanes you see, you never get away from that impulse to run to a window when you hear a droning noise in the air.

If it's a big liner carrying passengers to Bangkok or Singapore you want to go where it's going, and if you look at bombers going

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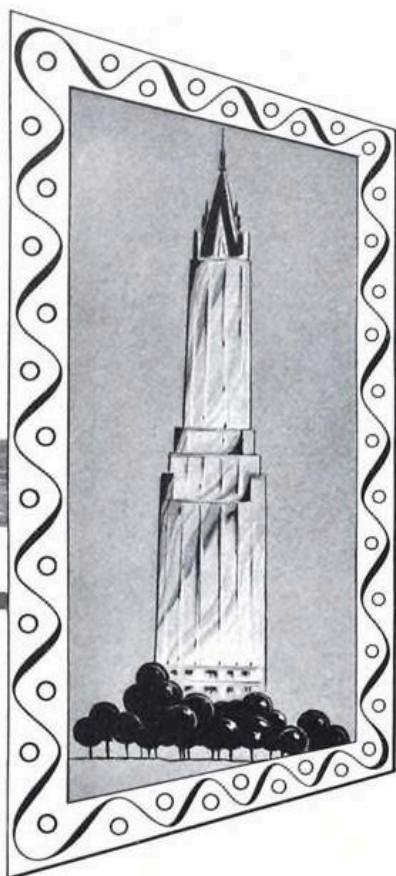
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Adventurers' Paradise

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out or pursuit planes in formation you just want to be in the air again and part of an outfit.

When something like that Shanghai massaero is on and you want to help one side and can't because they won't let you, you shut your eyes and say: "If you can't let me up in the sky keep those airplanes away from my eyes. If I can't look at the world through a 'prop,' like a man seeing things through a fever again, don't let motors get in my ears!"

You feel like Pegasus with his wings clipped and only plow horses to talk to.

From the Bund entrance we saw three bombers in formation coming up the Whangpoo towards the French Concession. They were high, looking soft and silvery, and just below them was the Japanese flagship, *Idzumo*, in the river.

Little fleecy puffs, like cotton clouds, started appearing in the air around the three bombers and down on the *Idzumo* anti-aircraft guns began pounding like riveting machines.

Three bombs slid out of the bellies of the bombers and then there was a terrific explosion. Wood and debris and black smoke went up in the air, and when it had cleared the planes were gone and we saw they had missed the boat.

The mob on the Bund was panicky so the iron door of the Cathay entrance was swung shut and locked, and Bos and I went back to the bar for our drink.

He took a quick one and said: "I guess it's started."

I went over to the travel bureau and reserved a ticket on a plane scheduled to leave Lung-hua air-drome for Nanking at four, then came back to the Cathay to wait and see what was happening.

Japanese seaplanes with pontoons on them circled clumsily around like birds with oversize boots on their feet, and sometimes a Chinese plane would come out of the clouds, draw a burst of fire from the *Idzumo* and dive back again.

Every time the refugees on the Bund heard an airplane motor they scrambled to get off the waterfront, down Nanking Road, and when the plane had passed they would drift back to the Bund again, just in time for another stampede, drawn by curiosity and chased by fear.

It's always the people who run that get killed.

With the tourists there was a girl from Seattle named Francine, and we went out in front of the Cathay, behind a mailbox, to see better, and when the mob rushed to get off the Bund we stepped behind the mailbox to keep from being swept on with it. After awhile a foreign girl with an expensive camera came and joined us, taking pictures of the panicky refugees charging towards our mailbox like a herd of cattle every time they heard a motor.

It was interesting for a little while, then it got tiresome and the girl from Seattle and I decided to go on the roof. Most of the doors leading onto the roof-levels of the Cathay had been locked but we went through a kitchen and found ourselves on a ledge outside the tower with a reception clerk and a baggage porter, a perfect view.

Down to our left was the *Idzumo*. We could see her anti-aircraft guns and men moving on deck. Clouds were low and at intervals of every half-hour a small balloon rose, swinging towards and over us in the wind while Japanese officers on the warship calculated the wind-drift and velocity from it.

Up where we were the wind, cutting obliquely across the Whangpoo, was terrific, so strong you could lean on it, and when there wasn't anything to watch we stepped back against the tower to get out of the gale.

Once in awhile a Chinese bi-plane carrying light bombs came out of the clouds and we could see a Japanese tracer bullet chase after it in a long curving arc across the sky; then more little puffs of smoke would appear around it and the plane would duck back in the clouds again.

You could feel regret coming up from the housetops and the street every time those Chinese boys came towards the *Idzumo* and were driven back before they were close enough to drop their bombs.

The flagship was like an iron island in a sea of hate; Chinese and foreigners alike looked on it like an evil dragon, and every time a Chinese plane came out of the sky the same thought went up from the people on the housetops and along the river: "Now everything is going to be all right; the dragon is going to die," and then the dragon would spit fire and the Chinese boys would turn back and the crowd would sigh.

Someone said: "Why don't they load a plane with bombs and then let some Chinese boy dive into it? It will be suicide but he will get the *Idzumo*." It was a vain hope. That anti-aircraft fire was so deadly; flying directly into it he would have been blown up before he got there.

Over on the edge of town a plane left a parabola of smoke behind it and then dove towards the ground, but we couldn't tell whether it was Chinese or Japanese. Down on the Bund was a commotion and looking over we saw a man lying covered with blood on the streetcar tracks and police driving the mob away.

It was a Japanese sailor trying to get back to his own side of the river, and one of the boys on the roof said: "Too damn bad they didn't kill him," and Francine giggled and we looked for planes again.

The tower of the Cathay rises like a penthouse with our ledge of roof on one side and another ledge

THE **Sherry Netherland**
FIFTH AVENUE... "WHERE THE PARK BEGINS" EUGENE VOIT, Manager

on the other, but you have to go back through the inside to get to it. We went over to see if the tower would shelter us from the wind on the other side and found an American boy from Cambridge lying on the edge of the roof taking pictures.

The roof of the Palace Hotel down below was black with people and on the street by the mailbox was the foreign girl, still taking pictures with her camera.

It was almost three-thirty and I was thinking of getting out to Lung-hua to catch my plane for Nanking when three light bombers flying low came out of the clouds in formation behind the Customs jetty.

They looked like Northrops and were coming straight for the *Idzumo*. Anti-aircraft fire started breaking around them, so close you could see them rolling like boats, and every explosion must have been close enough to make the crews think they were hit if they weren't.

The guns on the *Idzumo* were pounding away like mad and the three bombers were flying directly into them, tossing around up there, vignettted by smoke from exploded shells, so close you knew they must have been hit by pieces of flying metal but you couldn't tell how badly.

Three bombs slid out and I yelled to Francine: "For God's sake duck!" and then I forgot to, standing there trying to figure out how large the bombs were.

You could see they were coming our way. If they hadn't been hit so soon, or if those bombers had been coming up river instead of down, they might have come close enough to score a hit, but they didn't have a chance.

When the first bomb exploded a sampan rose out of the water, and a second later our hotel gave a lurch as though an earthquake had struck it. We looked over the edge to the Palace Hotel and where the people had been standing was a hole in the roof with smoke coming out, and down on the sidewalk bodies were lying close to the mailbox.

Smoke was coming up the stairway of the Cathay but the elevators were still running, and a flustered old lady from the tour was saying: "Do you think we ought to try to get over to the consulate?"

The gates of the hotel had been pulled shut and locked, but wounded were being carried in through a hole blown in the front of a dress shop by the Nanking Road entrance, and I stepped out of it over two mangled bodies into the street.

It was a shambles. A smoldering automobile stood where it had been hit, and down by my feet was a shoe, with a foot in it. A Chinese boy was spread out on the sidewalk as though he had been running when the bomb stopped him in the middle of a stride.

There were bodies everywhere but not so many as on the corner of Yu Ya Ching Road, where a wounded pilot and his dying bom-

bardier had tried to reach the race course and unload, knowing they were not likely to get back to their base alive and not wanting to crash into the city with bombs in the plane.

It was just bad luck. Coming down the river they held on as long as they could; the fire got too hot and the wind made them murderers; and swinging towards the race course the wounded bombardier was afraid he couldn't hold out and released too soon. A few more seconds and they would have been double heroes—but war is like that.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, daughter-in-law of the president, wired a protest to Madame Chiang Kai-shek for being there, and the jittery tourists moved out to Cathay Mansions, anxious to see the last of Shanghai.

They were definitely pacifists, not because they hated war but because they couldn't take it. Everything that war does was outside their door for an hour that day, but they wouldn't look at it, and when they left it wasn't with sympathy for the Chinese or condemnation of the Japs or a desire to save other people from what had happened at Yu Ya Ching Road. They only wanted to get back to Los Angeles where it couldn't happen to them, and they sailed next night on a Japanese boat.

At night the pennies of people who "bought Japanese" to save money lit up the sky line in the form of burning buildings and exploding shells. People stood on the housetops and listened to a low rumble and then a reverberation and felt the air shake every time a big shell went off.

In the morning planes woke them up and at night more planes and gunfire kept them awake. All day that "riveting machine" on the *Idzumo* hammered away at the sky and at night it lowered its nose and shot into the dark at the water. For weeks the guns on that ship were never cool, but still it stayed there.

Holes appeared in the sides of white buildings and go-downs went up in flames. Artillery shelled the Chinese positions from the ground and planes dive-bombed them from the air till the nerves of the civilians in Shanghai reached the breaking point just from listening to it, but Chinese gunners clung on through it all.

More soldiers streamed down from the interior to help them and when they were blown up more came to take their place. It was a one-way road. The first were smart young men, well outfitted and trained by Germans, but as the days passed and the line kept coming the soldiers in it looked different, the uniforms not so smart and equipment not so good. Only the courage was the same.

Those Chinese soldiers pouring into Shanghai to keep the fire going and not coming back reminded you of Li Ling, who wrote

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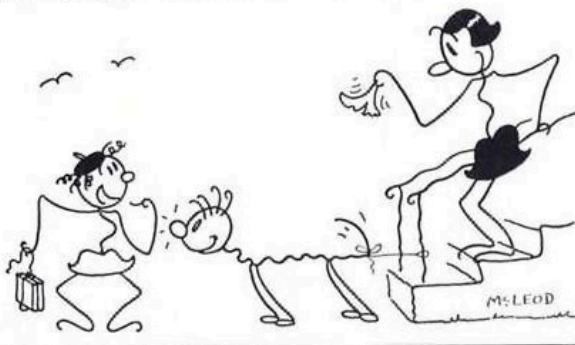
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AND WHEN I COME HOME FROM SCHOOL, MOTHER, I WANT SOME DOLE HAWAIIAN PINEAPPLE JUICE.



FOR
A PRELUDE
TO
MAGNIFICENCE
SEE PAGE 149

NEW Electric PRESSER

HANDIEST AID FOR BUSY, THRIFTY WELL GROOMED MEN

Do your own pressing this modern way, at home, in office or when traveling. Easy to use. No wet cloth, board or boiler. Plug in any socket and it's ready to press pants, collars, sleeves, lapels, dress pleats. And now, what it does to crumpled ties! It presses them into crisp newness before you can say Jack Robinson.



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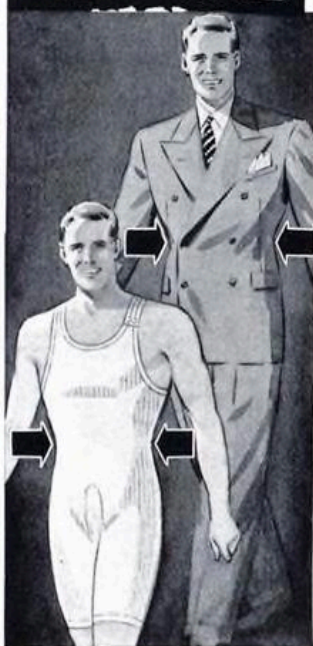
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"Banish waistline bulkiness

—to keep smartness
of good tailoring—
urge leading stylists

B. MARTINO, stylist,
Allenhofen & Martino, Chicago, says:

"The tailor cannot insure permanently trim fit around the waistline over 2-piece underwear—that's sure to bunch. We recommend the Lewis inner-Suit for 'streamlining' waistlines!"



New Zephyr-Light inner-Suit . . .

- STREAMLINES THE WAISTLINE
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Introduced for sports comfort . . . hailed by tailors for eliminating waistline bulkiness . . . the amazing Lewis Golf inner-Suit is now worn daily by thousands.

It is knit of Mercerized Lisle—weighs only 4 to 5 ounces—"gives" with every movement, springs back without lurching. Porous, it insulates your body—cooler in summer, warmer in winter. Light and medium weights. Also in new type Downy-soft wool-mix or half and half wool and silk. If your dealer can't supply you, write Lewis Knitting Co., Janesville, Wis.



Count the layers—
feel the bunches

Shirt, plus waistband, plus elastic or tie knots, plus buttons or snaps—is sure to bunch and show. Contrast that with the single, smooth layer of the Lewis Golf inner-Suit.

The **LEWIS**
Golf inner-Suit

Adventurers' Paradise

Continued from pages 42-187-189

to his friend a long time ago.

I came ten thousand leagues
Across the sandy deserts
In the service of my prince,
To break the Hun tribes.
My way was blocked and barred,
My arrows and sword broken,
My armies had faded away,
My reputation had gone.
My old mother is long dead.
Although I want to requite my
prince

How can I return?

A fortuneteller out on Rubicon Road lost the reputation of a lifetime by not knowing when to clear out. Passengers on incoming steamers told of seeing Chinese coolies being forced to kneel on docks beside the river with their arms tied behind them while Japanese soldiers pitched them in with bayonets, and Madame Chiang Kai-shek patiently wired Madame Eleanor Roosevelt an apology.

From the roofs at night we could see the flash of the big guns and start counting, and when we had counted to six we would hear a terrific explosion and Frank Cole would say: "A hundred coolies lost everything they owned just then."

The foreigners' houses with the dragon gates and swimming pools were blown to pieces and their dogs and horses killed, and little by little the Chinese lines were blasted from one line of trenches to another and the Japanese moved in.

Foreigners' businesses were blown where the houses and horses and dogs were, so most of them moved to Hongkong or went home. Some didn't have any business but they went to Hongkong because they knew sooner or later some Japanese soldier would push them around or pull a hat off or a cigarette out, and it's not pleasant for a foreigner to know he is going to have to take a sock at a Japanese soldier some day and there won't be anyone to get him out of a Japanese bastille when he does.

The best thing to do was go to Hongkong and sit in a hotel lounge with the rest of the boys, they decided.

Only Japanese and the Jews fleeing from Germany and Austria and Italy are coming into Shanghai now, and if the Japs take over the French Concession and the International Settlement the Jews will be in the same position they were where they came from, but they have to take a chance on that.

The lounge of the Hongkong Hotel is the greatest club in the world. The road from East to West and West to East leads through it. It's a short cut from Queen's Road to Des Voeux Road, and Pedder Street to the Gloucester, but whether you are going from East to West or just one road to another you don't go on through, you stop and sit down for awhile.

As a club, the only dues you pay are a drink. There are missionaries drinking Orange Squash and generals with whisky-soda. Jour-

nalists, cameramen, arms salesmen, airplane representatives, adventurers and importers sit in little groups under electric fans and over glasses.

Some of the people you meet in that club couldn't get in any other, and some belong to all of them. There are all nationalities and degrees of respectability, but most of them are thinking of the same thing: "Where do we go from here?"

George Fitch stopped there when he came back from reporting to Washington what the Japanese did in Nanking. The Japs sent word he would be relegated to the land of his fathers if he came back to Shanghai.

Maurice Cohen, the Jewish boy who saved the life of Sun Yat-sen and became a general, came there from Canton and joined the foreign refugees from Shanghai and Hankow and Nanking. They sit over iced glasses and talk about the old days and what so-and-so did back when.

Most of them came to China broke and some of them have come to Hongkong the same way, only when they came to China they were young, and they are old now, too tired to do it all over again, so they talk about the outsider on the Shanghai track who paid \$1200 for five and how General Sutton got Sir Victor's veterinary so drunk he couldn't tell a horse from a cow and then sold him a pony with sore feet.

They don't know where they are going next and most of them don't want to think about it. A Czecho-Slovakian munitions salesman sat through the summer and the winter with his friends in that lounge, waiting for his negotiations with the Chinese government to materialize.

He was a charming fellow, quiet and soft-mannered, a typical gentleman of the old school and everyone liked him. One day he picked up a paper and read where his country and nationality and the company he worked for had gone out from under him and he was the first to drop out. The rest have become fatalists by now. They are itinerant isolationists; when war comes they will move, as long as there is any place to move to.

Signor X reads about reported gas attacks in his paper, and says: "I hope those boys have masks."

Marge Rodgers came in, looking tired and not so smart. She had lost everything. We had a drink and talked about the good old days, and she smiled, just a bit wistfully, and said the Chinese god on Bubbling Well Road had let her down.

Frank Cole went back to America and got a job, but there isn't as much money in it, and now he has to work.

Sometimes one wonders where we'll be sitting next, saying: "Those were good old days back in Hongkong, or Manila, or Singapore or Saigon!"#



STOP! There's no need to clip the cartoons on pages 43-45 in this issue. We know you'd like to frame them for your den or mount them for your collection. But why not leave this copy intact to show to your friends and preserve for posterity?

You can have your cake and eat it too by sending in the coupon below, enclosing 10c in coin or stamps to cover the cost of postage and handling. You'll receive a special reprint of the 26 cartoons in full color. And there are all sorts of things you can do with your reprint.

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By cutting the cartoons out and mounting them individually, you'll have a personal album of the high spots in Esquire's six years of making cartoon history.
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Or you can make an entirely different type of wall decoration out of the portfolio by mounting it just as it comes to you in regular reprint form. This will give you a cartoon mural that measures 420 square inches. But why go on? You've probably already thought of a dozen better ways to use your reprint. So fill in the coupon and send it in with your 10c now.

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Esquire

OCTOBER
1939

• THE MAGAZINE FOR MEN

6th Anniversary Issue

Including a commemorative portfolio of the 26 most outstanding cartoons in Esquire's history!



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PRICE FIFTY CENTS
IN GREAT BRITAIN THREE SHILLINGS

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by
ARNOLD GINGRICH

Esquire

THE MAGAZINE FOR MEN

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Use of any person's name in fiction, semi-fictional articles or humorous features is to be regarded as a coincidence and not as the responsibility of *Esquire*. It is never done knowingly.

And now that we are six

With this issue, *Esquire* celebrates the advent of its seventh year. The birthday present is the garland of gags on pages 43 to 45. How many of them do you remember, from over these past six years? A better test, perhaps, would be to ask yourself how many you remember that aren't included in this hit parade. There's one, at least, that will probably seem conspicuous by its absence. That's the famous Petty drawing that bore as its caption that strange device: "Oh you would, would you?" Well, credit us at least with having thought of including it, but it turned out that the original drawing of that one had been made off with, many's the month ago. So we can only salute it here, *in absentia*. But, other than that one, and other than those that comprise the commemorative portfolio in this issue, what are the cartoons you remember best? Tell us what they are, and if enough of you coincide in naming enough of them, maybe we can get up another portfolio, selected by popular demand, to be included as a cartoon dividend in an early issue.

Meanwhile, how do you like your magazine now? Has it really been a year since we last asked you that? We used to pester you on that score every month. And your answers to that constant question were the straws from which, brick by brick, *Esquire* was built.

Esquire must have had some editorial vitality to provoke reader response in the first place, back there six years ago this month when the "awkwardly edited" first issue came out (as a Quarterly magazine), that curiously inept first issue whose cover might more suitably have graced a sporting goods catalogue than a magazine, and whose general layout, with its odd-sized illustrations and staggered carry-over pages, ran off like Guido Gimlet's

horse, "madly in all directions." Yes, the magazine had to be good to survive as bad a beginning as that. But from there on, reader response was the sustenance on which its editorial vitality battened. And still is.

This is not to say that *Esquire* has always veered with every breeze that blew. A lot of the breeze that blew down out of the bleachers was just hot air. But a lot of the comments that came from the bleachers were pretty shrewd. Why shouldn't they be? After all, the game is put on for its fans, and without their support it couldn't go on. So we've always played with one ear open and one eye peeled for the reactions of the crowd. Call it grandstanding, if you will, but what's wrong with going in for crowd-pleasing in a game that has as its object the ability to attract a crowd?

Well, what has the crowd been saying lately? For a long time the crowd kept chanting, with a pertinacious insistence worthy of a cheering-section intoning "We Wanna Touch-down," and the burden of this choring wail was "Cut out the goofy endings." This plaint of the plain reader ran to the effect that *Esquire's* stories were so dad-gummed arty or literary or realistic or highbrow or something (for any or all of which read "goofy") that the plain reader couldn't for the life of him tell, upon coming to the end of them, whether or not he had indeed come to the end. The endings were that goofy.

Well, the necessity for doing something about that mothered the invention of the dings, that quaint device with which, from that time on, all *Esquire* text features have ended. The installation of the dings, which is the approximate aesthetic equivalent of blowing a whistle, or ringing a bell, to bring the reader out of whatever trance *Esquire's* fiction may have put him in, was a great and

lasting success. Complaints about the goofy endings died out, not exactly overnight, but dwindled quickly down to the irreducible minimum. By us, the endings still seem no whit more or less goofy than before, but the plaint of the plain reader has ended.

No, ended is not the word. Changed is what we should say. Because the theme-how that used to be directed at the fiction, and the endings thereof, has latterly been shifted over to the illustrations. Morbid seems to be the word for *Esquire*, insofar as the illustrations are concerned. Concentrated gloom is what we dish out now, in illustrating our stories and articles, if the new plaint of the plain reader is to be believed. And we're increasingly of a mind to believe it. We tried to laugh off this criticism for a long time, just as we shrugged away for many months the battle-cry about the goofy endings. But we've come to believe that this is another instance where the customers are right.

If *Esquire's* illustrations can't be artistic without being morbid or gloomy, why then we want to be end-man on the chorus of those who are kicking about them. We will even sing, solo, this heartfelt phrase: "Then the hell with artistry."

There's enough free gloom in the air these days that *Esquire* need feel no urge to add to the total. So henceforth every *Esquire* illustrator must sing to himself, night and morning just before brushing his teeth, verses and chorus of *Brighten the Corner Where You Are*. This is a standing assignment, at least until its effect is plainly evident in their work. And if this be regimentation, we mean to make the most of it.

We can think of no better resolution than this with which to start out our seventh year. But if you can, let's hear it.



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